



Digging in Dodge

Dodge County Master Gardeners

Issue 3

Welcome Matt Hanson!

By Matt Hanson, Dodge County UW-Extension Crops and Soils Agent

As you have perhaps heard, on November 1st I transferred to Dodge County after serving as Crops and Soils Agent in Jefferson County for the past eight years. I have been heavily involved with agriculture for many years. I was born and raised on a farm just north of Hudson, Wisconsin in St. Croix County. I received a Bachelors Degree from UW-River Falls in Agronomy and a Master's Degree from the University of Arkansas - Fayetteville with an emphasis in Soil Fertility and Chemistry. After returning to Wisconsin, I worked as an instructor at UW-River Falls and taught soils, geology and natural resources. About two years later I accepted the Crops and Soils Agent position with UW-Extension in Jefferson County. Working with UW-Extension has combined the best of both education and agriculture which have been my passion. When the Dodge County position opened, I decided that it looked like an exciting opportunity to work in a larger and more agriculturally diverse county. It has been a great experience so far and the transition has been very smooth.



A Monarch butterfly enjoys a taste of spring

Gardener program in 1998. The program was offered every other year because of the time commitment involved. However, over the years I decided to devote more time to horticultural education and developed many of my own presentations. Over the years I improved the format of the program from watching a series of videotapes to inviting Extension Specialists and other guests to teach components of the program. Today, there are well over 100 certified Master Gardeners in Jefferson County. These individuals have served as a valuable resource that I have been able to call upon to assist with answering horticultural questions. This has also provided me with additional time to continue to work with agricultural producers in the county. I have really enjoyed the Master Gardener program and the opportunity that it has provided to meet a great group of people with interests and expertise in areas that we'd probably all love to learn more about.

Finally, in addition to the change with my job, my wife Amy and I were recently blessed with the birth of our first daughter on October 13th. Lauren Elizabeth was 7 pounds 2 ounces and 19 inches long at birth. It sure has been fun, and amazing to watch her grow before our very eyes. We are yet another example of a couple that was about 90 percent complete with the paperwork to adopt a special-needs child and then learned that we were going to become parents. For now we have decided to postpone adoption, but we continue to discuss the possibility in the future.

In Jefferson County I established a Master

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Don't miss the January 2005 issue of Backyard Living Magazine. Bonita Weiland Hare and her husband Pat are featured with their spectacular garden design and landscape renovation. Bonnie is an intern Master Gardener in Dodge County.

Let's Do Lunch

If you are looking for a great way to spend a lunch hour, you can take advantage of the Brown Bag Lunch Program offered at the UW-Extension Office at the Administration Building in Juneau. The programs are free and count toward continuing education hours. They run from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. The programs are designed for statewide Master Gardeners and those who are interested in horticultural topics. The schedule of topics is below.

Fruit Year In-Review

January 28

Dick Weidman, Superintendent of the Peninsular Agricultural Research Station, will share his observations on the performance of various fruit crops during the 2003 growing season. The Peninsular ARS has been testing and evaluating cultivars for Wisconsin for years.

Interactive Vegetable Trial Program for 2005

February 18

Join Karen Delahaut and Bob Tomesh in a preview plan for evaluating the performance of selected vegetable crops for the 2005 season. This vegetable crop performance review is being planned to include Master Gardeners with back-

yard gardens.

Training and Pruning

Fruit Trees

March 18

Proper training through correct pruning is important for a healthy, strong fruit tree. Bob Tomesh will lead the discussion.

Rain Gardens: Planning and Implementation

April 29

Rain gardens are gardens that are designed to soak up the rain water that comes to your home area and would otherwise result in water runoff. Susan Wade will discuss using wildflowers and other native vegetation in a rain garden for the home landscape.

Biologically Safe Label: Wisconsin's "Healthy Grown"

Label

May 20

Information will be available at a later date.

Growing Iris

June 24

Irises are among the earliest blooming and easiest perennials to grow. Join Bob Tomesh in a discussion of ideas for cultivar selection and grow-

ing.

Growing Alliums

July 29

Most of us are familiar with the edible varieties belonging to the onion or allium family, which include garlic, chives, leeks, onions, and shallots. Bob Tomesh will present tips on growing alliums.

"I went out for a walk and finally concluded to stay out till sundown, for going out, I found, was really going in." John Muir

Collecting, Storing and Propagating Nut Crop Plants

August 26

Nut trees are ideal for landscapes and conservation plantings. Bob Tomesh will discuss those that are common in Wisconsin.

Soil Amendments

September 30

Growing Peonies

October 28

TBA—November 11

Home Propagation Techniques

December 16

2005 Master Gardeners Meeting Schedule

The Board of Directors met in November and worked on planning our meeting schedule for 2005. We have some great meetings and speakers lined up. Anyone interested in horticulture is welcome to attend. The meetings start at 6:30 p.m. and will be held in the Administration Building, 127 E. Oak Street in Juneau, except as noted.

January 25—We will have the opportunity to meet with Matt Hanson, our new UW-Extension Agent. There will be a slide presentation of projects that were worked on in 2004. Lori Schultz will update us on the volunteer hours that were completed. Those who were certified in October will be recognized. We will include time to discuss topics of interest to you.

February 24—Darlene Lauersdorf and Maureen Day from Ebert's Greenhouse Village will enlighten us on the topic of pruning. Come and find out what we should prune. When should we prune? What is the correct way to prune?

March 22—Joe and Diane Powelka from the Madison Chapter of Wild Ones will

share innovative ways to incorporate natural landscapes.

April 28—Bob Tomesh will talk about grafting techniques. We will elect two Board members at this meeting.

May 26—We will have a plant exchange and go over our project list for 2005.

June 23—Sue Gronholz will present information on heirlooms, herbs, and seed saving.

July 28—Rain Gardens will be discussed with Susan Wade and Matt Hanson. This meeting will be at the Union Hall in Horicon. We will then have the opportunity to see the rain garden at Bowling Green Park that was established in 2004.

August—no meeting. We will be working on a group trip.

September 22—Are hostas your passion? Bob Zondag from J.W. Jung Seed Company will talk about varieties of hostas and how to grow

them.

October 27—We will enjoy hearing about prairie gardens with members from our group presenting.

November—No meeting

December—No meeting

We will look forward to seeing you at the meetings! We welcome your input regarding meetings, speakers, and projects.

"To plant seeds, and watch the renewal of life,—this is the commonest delight of the race, the most satisfactory thing a man can do." Charles Warner



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